

NOTES FROM THE:

Chief for Enlisted Matters

by CMS Lorraine A. Tanner, DSN 697-1220



What a great time of year to be in the Air Force—and be part of the Air Force Awards Program. Try to imagine reading a great book every 20-30 minutes. The kind of book that you can't wait to share with someone else. That is what each of the packages I have read is like. You are doing wonderful things contributing to our mission and the nomination packages confirm this. Every nominee is a winner. The best of the best. But don't ever forget a winner is only as good as the team behind them, beside them, and in front of them. You are a part of our Air Force team and you should be proud of your accomplishments and take the time to congratulate the "FM Winners", because their successes are yours.

The year looks good for us so far. If you haven't heard, we are now eligible to receive a Zone A and Zone B reenlistment bonus. This is an awesome incentive for our folks who work so very hard every day. It looks as though an E-4 with over three years and reenlisting for four years will gross over \$2500 and an E-5 with over six years will gross over \$3100. It is well deserved! I want to take the opportunity to thank the folks at AMC for taking the lead on this initiative. Without their hard work and research, this would not have become reality. Team AMC—I salute you!

But you know, everyday someone in our business is taking the lead to make things happen. Folks are going the extra mile with no thought of rewards and benefits. Their only motivation comes from within. Their only goal is to help. The Air Force defines it as Service Before Self. We tend, in our Air Force, to put pretty words on things and define them formally. But let's talk about this core value in my terms.

Service before self began the minute you entered basic training and the reality of what we do in our Air Force became real to you. Do you remember the oath? You said you would protect and defend against all enemies, foreign and domestic. At that moment the basic core value of Service Before Self was implanted into your minds and your hearts. What other profession requires us to pay the ultimate sacrifice and hold you responsible for the freedom of my children, as well as your own?

The Air Force is not just a job—but a commitment. Every little task or major project you undertake, every decision you make strengthens us to serve our country, protect our freedoms, and defend our land. We sometimes get lost in our peacetime mission, forgetting what we do in peace prepares us for war. This is why our standards are so high. They have always been high—and will continue to be high. Reach for the "gold" and strive to be the best in everything you do. Challenge yourselves and those who work for you to be better, smarter, and more efficient. **YOU CAN DO IT!** Focus on what you have to do to meet the highest expectations. It means giving a whole lot more than just hours. It means investing a piece of yourself in the Air Force. That investment is not about dollars, or hours, or pats on the back. The investment is about making a difference everyday; preparing as if tomorrow will be the day the "balloon" goes up and we are in the middle of another conflict or war. The more efficient and prepared we are when and if that happens, the bigger and better the financial management contribution is during the critical times. Your commanders trust you to be ready, day or night, today or tomorrow. That young airman on the flightline trusts you to know your job better than anyone else, so that if he must deploy, he can count on you to ensure his entitlements, thus his family, are taken care of. So everyday that you serve the Air Force, you are preparing to make that ultimate sacrifice. We owe it to ourselves, our airman in arms and our commanders to be ready.

So as we face each day, each travel voucher, each AF Form 9, each allotment form, each phone call, each customer, remember that every task, every major project and every decision you make is critical to the readiness of the United States Air Force and you. Your job and your high standards, are the key to that readiness. Remember, every day you proudly wear your uniform and practice your oath, you are living the phrase Service Before Self.